

POSITION PAPER

INITIAL MEETING OF THE
UN COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL
USES OF OUTER SPACE

CONFIDENTIAL

March 13, 1962

ANNEX E

DEFINITION OF OUTER SPACE BOUNDARY
(CONTINGENCY)

THE PROBLEM

The position to be taken by the United States in the event pressure develops in the Outer Space Committee or its Legal Subcommittee for a definition of an altitude boundary for a lower limit for outer space and/or an upper limit for air space.

UNITED STATES POSITION

1. The United States should oppose as premature any attempt to define a boundary for outer space or air space.
2. As a fallback, the Delegation may agree to the creation of a working group on the boundary question. The United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union should be represented on this group.

COMMENT

1. The Department of Defense, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Federal Aviation Agency are currently preparing studies for the National Aeronautics and Space Council concerning the consequences of the selection of various alternative altitudes. The security aspects of agreement upon a specific altitude cannot be fully appreciated pending the completion of this study.
2. The United States has, by implication, consistently taken the position that satellites now in orbit are in outer space. The United States is, however, not prepared at this time to discuss any specific definition of the limits of outer space.
3. The United Kingdom is extremely sensitive concerning the boundary question. We have undertaken not to enunciate a more specific or different position than that stated at paragraph 2, above, without prior consultation.

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